Washington Learns

A Roadmap for Washington Learns

FRAMEWORK

We are proposing a three-step process for completing the work for Washington Learns to improve the educational system in Washington State. In basic terms, the process is one of figuring out where you currently stand as a state, establishing where you would like to be, and then looking at existing and other resources and policies necessary to move you from where you are to where you want to be.

To inform this process, we recommend that the Steering Committee develop a vision statement to ground Committee discussions throughout the 18-month study process. The statement can either be a broad goal for the system and/or it's students or a statement of the problem that Washington Learns is trying to solve. Once established, the statement serves as a reminder to the Steering Committee and the Advisory Committees that any recommendations or options should in some way achieve our goal or solve our problem. We propose to undertake this task in September.

PROPOSED THREE-STEP PROCESS

Step 1: Establish a baseline

- Describe the current system (legal foundation, program and financial structures, demographic pressures, etc.)
- Look at previous efforts/studies in Washington
- Examine other states that are similarly situated (best practices, state-to-state comparisons, successful reform efforts, etc.)

Step 2: Set broad targets/goals

- Steering Committee will identify and adopt a vision statement to ground their discussions throughout the 18-month study process
- Develop a detailed work plan for the study (based on authorizing legislation, Advisory Committees suggestions, etc.)

Step 3: Develop solutions/recommendations

- Implement work plan (iterative process between the Steering Committee and the Advisory Committees)
- Focus on maximizing existing resources (are we spending our money on the right things, are we doing the right things well?)
- Determine what changes will be necessary to achieve stated goals (new policies/programs, additional resources)
- Steering Committee will work with the Advisory Committees to establish benchmarks/measures
- Steering Committee will submit interim and final reports as required by the authorizing legislation

EARLY LEARNING • K-12 EDUCATION • HIGHER EDUCATION

Washington Learns

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The Steering Committee is responsible for ensuring that transition issues are addressed and that Washington Learns moves us toward a more comprehensive system. To aid in this process and to prevent the Advisory Committees from operating in their traditional silos, the Steering Committee may want to consider the following options:

- Special advisory subgroup for transitions – could either appoint additional people to this subgroup or this could be selected members of each established Advisory Committee

- Hold periodic joint Steering and Advisory Committee meetings (all groups) to confirm findings or recommendations as a larger group – this could occur just before the interim and final reports are due and would include presentations by the Advisory Committees to the Steering Committee highlighting the Advisory Committee findings and recommendations

- Have a summit of all Advisory Committee members and the Steering Committee to specifically address transition issues – much like the Education Summit that was held in June

- Hold joint Advisory Committee meetings (e.g. higher ed and K-12 or K-12 and early learning) – these meetings would focus on transition and other overlapping issues

- Cross-pollinate Advisory Committee membership so that early learning has representatives on K-12 and higher ed, K-12 has representatives on early learning and higher ed, and higher ed has representatives on early learning and K-12

FIRST STEPS (AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER)

Steering Committee

- Organize – adopt operating procedures, establish a meeting schedule, finish Advisory Committee appointments, confirm roadmap/process
- Establish a baseline – overview of Washington's education system
- Establish a vision and broad targets/goals
- Develop a work plan

Advisory Committees

- Establish a baseline – previous studies and efforts, overview of current programs and structures, demographic pressures, stakeholder issues, examine other states
- Suggest key issues for consideration
- Implement the work plan

EARLY LEARNING • K-12 EDUCATION • HIGHER EDUCATION